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The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report on the role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 67/230. It discusses progress in human well-being, with attention to poverty, employment and social integration, and the significance of inequality in the global development agenda. Paying particular attention to the ongoing deliberations of the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals, the report notes the work of the United Nations system and other actors in taking better account of inequality and its impacts on human well-being, and concludes with a set of recommendations for promoting the new global human order within the post-2015 sustainable development framework.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 55/48, the General Assembly took note of the Declaration of the South Summit, adopted in Havana on 14 April 2000, which addressed the need for a new global human order aimed at reversing the growing disparities between rich and poor both among and within countries through the promotion of growth with equity, the eradication of poverty, the expansion of productive employment and the promotion of gender equality and social integration. This call echoed clearly the outcomes of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, the Millennium Summit and other development conferences of the time. Those events marked a growing recognition that the focus and dynamics of international development and cooperation would need to shift if development was to move forward in an equitable way that ensured peace, security and stability and gave all peoples the fairest chance of realizing their full development potential. The Assembly has since undertaken periodic reviews of the role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order, issuing resolutions on the topic in its fifty-seventh, sixty-second and sixty-seventh sessions.

2. The outcome document of the World Summit, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, gave particular attention to the structure and influence of international cooperation on development. The Summit launched a commitment to a new era of international cooperation between Governments and peoples based on a spirit of partnership that puts the needs, rights and aspirations of people at the centre of decisions and joint actions. The concept of a new global human order hinges on this premise. It is about making equitable and inclusive improvements in human well-being and establishing a cooperative and integrated approach to achieving this in a fair and balanced manner.

3. In discussing the role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order, the present report reviews progress since the 1990s in achieving more equitable level of human well-being, paying particular attention to the objectives of eradicating poverty, expanding productive employment, promoting gender equality and social integration and promoting growth with equity. It assesses the achievement of these objectives through an examination of the progress towards internationally agreed commitments and goals, paying particular attention to the Millennium Development Goals. It also presents a brief assessment of the challenges to human progress posed by inequality among and within countries. The report concludes with a set of recommendations for strengthening the promotion of a new global human order at the national and international levels.

II. Success and challenges in promoting a new global human order

4. The world has seen much social and economic progress in the years since the World Summit for Social Development, held in 1995, and the South Summit, held in 2000, particularly in the areas of poverty eradication and gender equality. At a global level, the world has achieved its goal of halving, by 2015, the 1990 poverty rate. In fact, it is estimated that the target for the global poverty rate was reached five years early, with a poverty rate of 22 per cent in 2010.[1] Similarly, women and

[1] United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014* (New York).

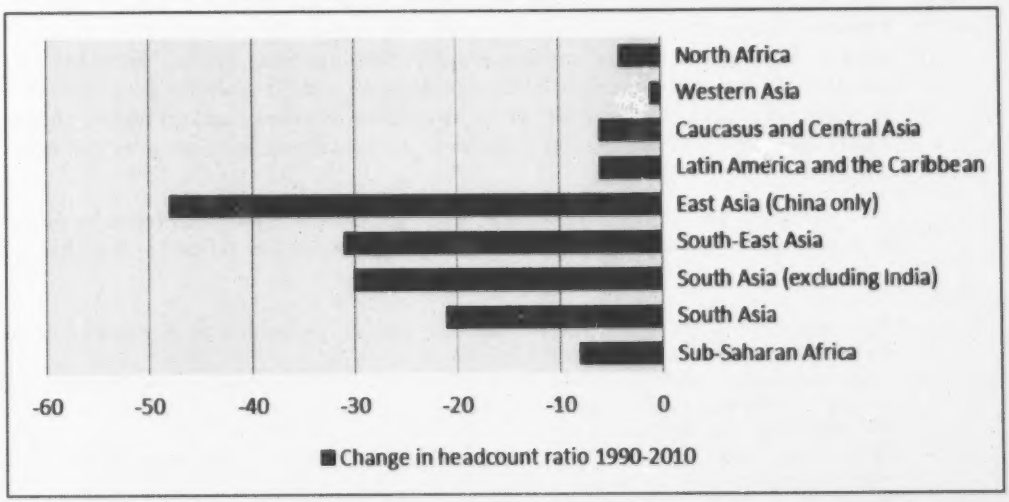
girls have been drawing progressively closer to parity in access to education at all levels, as well as in employment opportunities and decision-making power.

5. However, progress in both poverty eradication and gender equality has been quite varied, and significant disparities remain. In the area of employment, progress was stymied by the impact of and slow recovery from the 2008 global financial and economic crisis. While the employment crisis affected developed countries more directly than other countries, the impact on the global marketplace was not negligible. Similarly, progress towards equitable growth and social integration has been mixed, with the reality and perception of rising inequality threatening social and economic stability in many parts of the world.

A. Eradicating poverty

6. Recent efforts to eradicate poverty at the international level have been focused on the first target of the first of the Millennium Development Goals, namely, to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1.25 per day. At the global level, this target has been achieved, and all developing regions have contributed to its achievement. East and South-East Asia have led the way, with China alone reducing its poverty rate by 48 per cent, from 60 per cent to 12 per cent, between 1990 and 2010 (see figure I).[1] Using World Bank regional groupings, projections to 2015 anticipate continued progress in all regions except the Middle East and North Africa, the latter of which is expected to see a slight decline in its poverty rate in 2015 to 2.6 per cent, from 2.41 per cent in 2010. Accelerated progress is anticipated for both South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.[2]

Figure I
Percentage change in poverty headcount ratio 1990-2010



Source: *Millennium Development Goals Report 2014*.

[2] World Bank, PovcalNet database (http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet).

7. There has also been a notable regional concentration of progress in reducing the number of people living in poverty. Approximately 1.2 billion people live in extreme poverty, the vast majority of whom continue to live in the world's most populous regions: East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. East Asia and the Pacific accounted for around 67 per cent of the decrease from 1999 to 2010 in the number of people in developing regions living on less than $1.25 per day.[2] This has left South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa accounting for an even greater and more disproportionate share of the poor in the developing world.[3] While the proportion of the world's poor in developing regions living in East Asia and the Pacific decreased from 38 per cent in 1999 to 20 per cent in 2010, in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, the proportion increased from 22 per cent to 34 per cent and from 36 per cent to 42 per cent, respectively.[2] Fuelled by greater reductions in India, South Asia is set to take the lead in reducing aggregate poverty over the next 5 to 10 years, before slowing down again, followed in turn by sub-Saharan Africa. However, acceleration of the rate of reduction of poverty in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to be much more modest.[4]

8. These regional patterns are very much influenced by country-level progress and situations. Around 85 per cent of people living in extreme poverty live in just 20 countries.[5] In 2010, five countries accounted for 65 per cent of the world's poor living below $1.25 per day. India alone accounted for one third of the global population of people living in extreme poverty, followed by China at 13 per cent, Nigeria at 9 per cent and Bangladesh and the Democratic Republic of the Congo at 5 per cent each.[1] In the regions and countries with the greatest reductions in poverty, positive and productive growth has been a major contributing factor. Of those five countries, the top three, India, China and Nigeria, have experienced such significant economic growth that they each reached middle-income status by 2010. This means that the vast majority of the world's poor no longer live in the world's poorest countries.

9. This reality should not, however, detract from the plight of the low-income countries facing the highest poverty rates. For many of those countries, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa, conflict, fragility and instability hamper prospects for progress. An estimated one third of the world's poor lives in countries faced with the combined challenges of conflict or post-conflict situations and political, social and/or economic instability, and this share is expected to increase over the next 20 to 30 years.[4]

10. While the poverty rate for middle- and high-income States[6] has fallen by more than half since 1981, poverty for low-income countries has fallen by less than a

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[3] According to PovcalNet, in 2010, 14 per cent of the population in the developing regions lived in sub-Saharan Africa and 28 per cent in South Asia.

[4] Laurence Chandy, Natasha Ledlie and Veronika Penciakova, "The final countdown: prospects for ending extreme poverty by 2030", in *Global Views: Policy Paper 2013-04* (Washington, D.C., Brookings Institution, 2013).

[5] United States Agency for International Development, "Getting to zero: a discussion paper on ending extreme poverty" (Washington, D.C., 2013).

[6] The middle-income countries are the 86 countries with gross national income per capita between $1,046 and $12,745, a range set by the World Bank. They account for just under half of the world's population and are home to one third of people across the globe living on less than $2 per day. A high-income economy is defined by the World Bank as a country with a gross national income per capita above $12,746 in 2013. Income levels are calculated using the Atlas method, a three-year average exchange rate adjusted by inflation.

third. Similarly, while the total additional income needed to eradicate poverty has declined by more than 50 per cent since 1981, in low-income countries it has increased by 33 per cent, an increase driven by growing numbers of the poor as well as stagnant average income among people living in poverty. In addition, by 2010, 44 per cent of persons in low-income countries lived in extreme poverty, more than double the average rate of 21 per cent for developing countries.[7]

11. The varying shifts and the persistence of the economic and geographic contexts of global poverty have made it more evident that poverty is as much a problem of distribution and exclusion as it is a problem of scarcity. For example, in India and Nigeria, both middle-income countries with thriving economies, the poverty rates in 2010 were 60 per cent and 68 per cent, respectively.[2] In addition, while the average distance from the poverty line of the world's extreme poor has decreased by 25 per cent over the past 30 years, most of this change has occurred in China and India, leaving the average income of the poor relatively unchanged in other parts of the developing world.[7] With this paradox of progress and stagnation has come growing recognition that any efforts to address poverty must go beyond monitoring its symptoms to rooting out its causes. This requires basing poverty eradication strategies on the broader understanding of poverty, evoked at the World Summit for Social Development, in which poverty is understood as a multidimensional concept encompassing the intersecting manifestations of social, economic and civic deprivations and injustice.

12. Within the United Nations system, this multidimensional understanding of poverty is being promoted increasingly, as are multi-pronged strategies for poverty eradication. For example, in the past five years, the *Report of the World Social Situation* and the *Human Development Report*, both produced by the United Nations, have encouraged a multidimensional approach to poverty eradication, giving attention to strengthening opportunities for individuals to build their capabilities through access to and effective use of basic social services, such as education and health care, and through decent work and income security, resulting in reduced vulnerability and social exclusion. This approach, focused on capabilities and empowerment, has been endorsed repeatedly in intergovernmental processes.

B. Expanding productive employment

13. Jobs of high quality are important for ensuring fair and balanced progress in the improvement of human well-being. Within the United Nations system, the implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017), with its focus on full employment and decent work for all, has helped to promote this understanding and generate positive action for improving employment prospects and labour force dynamics across the globe.

14. Experience has shown that economic growth will bring few people-centred returns without attention to opportunities for employment and decent work for all. Over the past decade, developing countries with the greatest declines in vulnerable employment and in poverty among the working poor in the early 2000s saw more

[7] Pedro Olinto, Kathleen Beegle, Carlos Sobrado and Hiroki Uematsu, "The state of the poor: where are the poor, where is extreme poverty harder to end, and what is the current profile of the world's poor?" *Economic Premise*, No. 125 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, October 2013).

improvement in annual per capita income than developing countries with less improvement in job quality. On a related note, the creation of decent, adequately remunerated work has proven to be a requisite for sustainable poverty reduction.[8]

15. Over the past two decades, employment in developing countries has increased at nearly double the rate of that in developed countries, corresponding to a similar rate of growth in the working-age population. However, many of the added jobs are informal and vulnerable, owing to the poverty and lack of social protection that force people in developing countries to engage in any remunerative work that they can find. As a result, informal and vulnerable work, while declining, continues to be a significant feature of the employment dynamics in developing countries.

16. In the wake of the global financial and economic crisis, progress in reducing the number of the working poor has slowed in South-East Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the has continued to grow in sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, the number of people in vulnerable employment has been growing at rates well above pre-crisis levels, and informal employment remains prevalent.[9]

17. The extent of vulnerable and informal work has contributed to slowing improvements in labour productivity, making it difficult to close the productivity gap between developed and developing countries. For example, despite comparatively impressive productivity gains in East Asia, at current rates it would take around 19 years for East Asia to reach the same level of labour productivity as in developed countries today. South Asia and South-East Asia would not reach similar rates until 2055 and 2071, respectively.[8] Ensuring balanced progress in human well-being can play an important role in curbing these trends, particularly through investments in education and skills development.

18. Despite these persistent challenges to the expansion of productive employment in developing countries, some positive transformations have occurred. One such transformation is the growing proportion of middle-class workers in developing regions. Today, 45 per cent of workers in developing countries are classified as middle class or above (living on more than $4 per day per family member), compared with less than 20 per cent two decades ago.[8]

C. Promoting gender equality and social integration

19. Gender equality and broader social integration remain integral to bringing about a new global human order. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in 1995, continues to guide many efforts towards gender equality in national and international policy strategies. While the Platform for Action identified 12 areas of concern, most visible in the international promotion and monitoring of gender equality have been the gender-specific targets and measures of the Millennium Development Goals and the Gender Inequality Index of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In its *Human Development Report 2014*, UNDP introduced the Gender Development Index, which measures the female-to-male ratio of a set of indicators. Together,

[8] International Labour Organization, *World of Work Report 2014: Developing with Jobs* (Geneva, 2014).

[9] Ibid., *Global Employment Trends 2014: Risk of a Jobless Recovery?* (Geneva, 2014).

these measurement tools have focused global attention on three key elements of social well-being for women and girls, namely education, health and employment or income, and have promoted and assessed women's civic participation.

20. While there has been overall progress for both women and men in most aspects of development, large gender gaps persist. For example, in 2012, the employment-to-population ratio for women and men stood at 49 and 62 per cent, respectively, in developed countries, and 46.6 and 74.7 per cent, respectively, in developing countries. For developing countries, the gender gap has, in fact, shown a slight increase in the years since the 2008 global financial and economic crisis.[9] Similarly, despite impressive progress in some regions, women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making. Women held 21 per cent of seats in single-house or lower parliaments in 2013, up from 14 per cent in 2000.[10]

21. Efforts to improve gender equality have been most successful in education. Globally, parity has been achieved in primary school enrolment. All regions have made progress, albeit at different rates. In Western Asia and sub-Saharan North Africa, parity has yet to be met, but all three regions are drawing close, with a gender parity index of 0.93, 0.93 and 0.94, respectively, for primary school enrolment. Significant progress has also been made in improving the access of girls to secondary education. Only Western and South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa have yet to reach parity, with sub-Saharan Africa the farthest behind, with a gender parity index for secondary school enrolment of 0.83.[10]

22. However, as evidenced by the continuing gender gaps in other critical measures of human well-being, translating girls' education gains into other forms of social, economic and political capital has proven difficult. Gender often serves as a compounding disadvantage for women and girls, such as when gender and poverty combine to put poor women and girls at a particularly deep development disadvantage. For example, while poverty has a greater impact on educational attainment than gender alone, poor women aged 15 to 30 have one less year of schooling, on average, than their male counterparts.[7] This discrepancy points to continued social and cultural exclusion and discrimination based on gender.

23. Aside from the promotion of gender equality, the effective promotion and comprehensive assessment of social integration and inclusion has remained somewhat elusive for the global development agenda. At the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, Member States highlighted the importance to people-centred development of strengthening social integration and civil society. Member States resolved to foster stable, safe and just societies based on the promotion and protection of all human rights, as well as on non-discrimination, tolerance, respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups and persons (see A/CONF.166/9, chap. I, annex I). While this sentiment was reiterated, to some degree, in the Millennium Declaration, it has not been translated into actionable goals or other accountability mechanisms at the international level. The proposed focus on inclusive development fostered in the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda may help to ensure its inclusion in development planning.

24. Social polarization, high or widening disparities in income and wealth, both within and among nations, the persistent marginalization of social and population

[10] Millennium Development Goals Gender Chart (United Nations, 2014).

groups and even of groups of countries, and the development of organized crime are all features of today's social ethos and symptomatic of compromised social cohesion. Affirmative action, or direct targeted preferential treatment, has been an immediate but controversial way of redressing historic exclusion and systemic vulnerability among social and population groups. However, this method fails to address the underlying social, cultural and political drivers of such exclusion. Affirmative action must therefore be an intermediary tool in a wider arsenal of anti-discrimination policies and legal reform, pro-poor policies, and public awareness campaigns aimed at shifting prevailing attitudes and norms.

D. Promoting growth with equity

25. In the past 10 to 15 years, developing countries have been experiencing relatively high growth rates, surpassing the growth rate of developed countries as a group. For example, between 2005 and 2012, the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP) in developing countries averaged five times the annual growth rate of developed countries.[11] However, progress has been concentrated in a few countries and regions and convergence between the developed and developing countries has been slow. In fact, if one compares the average per capita income of the 15 richest and 15 poorest countries in the world, the gap is greater now than it was 30 years ago, despite some convergence in the period after the 2008 financial crisis (see TD/B/61/7). In absolute terms, the difference in average income between rich and poor countries increased from $18,525 in 1980 to $32,000 in 2010.[12]

26. In addition, with the global economy dominated by finance and revenue-seeking activities, the recent period of global growth has perpetuated some inequities and widened others. For example, the share of the poorest in the additional income generated by the recent accelerated growth is less than their average share in income, and has in fact declined in recent years. On average, for every $100 of additional income, the poorest 20 per cent of the global population receives 70 cents.[12] In most countries, the top income strata have been the top, if not the only, economic beneficiaries of the accelerated growth.

27. Though still recovering from the impact of the global financial and economic crisis, global economic growth is expected to accelerate in 2014 and 2015 to 2.8 and 3.2 per cent, respectively. Developing countries are expected to continue to lead global economic growth, with projected growth rates of between 4.7 and 5.1 per cent.[11] While growth alone has proven insufficient for improving progress in human well-being, it remains a vital part of any effective people-centred development strategy. It is important that growth strategies be informed by the social and environmental dimensions of development in order to achieve equitable and sustainable growth.

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[11] *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2014* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.II.C.2).

[12] *Report of the World Social Situation 2013: Inequality Matters* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 13.IV.2).

E. Inequality as a threat to equitable improvements in human well-being

28. Despite astounding aggregate progress, opportunities in life still depend largely on a person's country of residence. For the vast majority of countries, opportunities for human progress are further affected by a combination of factors, including social-group dynamics, income levels and the geographic distribution of the population. Promoting and realizing a new global human order therefore require national and international efforts to balance the scales of human well-being, both within and across borders.

29. The eradication of poverty, whether understood as an income-based or multidimensional phenomenon, is a difficult goal to achieve in a situation of high inequality. Similarly, equality, access to decent work, and gender equality and social integration are interconnected, each shaping the other through processes of systemic and unintentional exclusion and discrimination. These facts have been well established within the social and economic development literature.[13]

30. The average income of the world's richest five per cent is estimated to be nearly 200 times that of the poorest 10 per cent. Income inequality within and among countries varies quite a bit; however, in the past two to three decades, high inequality has remained a general trend of global economic patterns (see TD/B/61/7). While global inequality has plateaued in the past decade, within-country inequality has risen in the majority of countries.[12] Yet, between-country inequality still accounts for the greatest proportion of global inequality. Similarly, global wealth remains highly concentrated, with the wealthiest 1 per cent of the population owning 40 per cent of the wealth.[14] A similar trend occurs in many countries, with the wealthiest 10 per cent of the population owning 70 to 90 per cent of national wealth.[15]

31. Income and wealth inequalities interact with education, health, civic participation and other contributors and measures of human well-being to trap individuals and communities in cycles of deprivation and disadvantage. For example, household survey data on stunting in children has shown large disparities between poor and rich households. In some countries, the prevalence of stunting among children in the poorest quintile is as much as nine times higher than that of children in the richest quintile.[12] These children are, in turn, more likely to complete less schooling and make less money as adults. Similarly, in low-income countries, only 14 per cent of children in the poorest quintile complete lower secondary education compared to 61 per cent of those in the richest quintile, leaving those in the poorest quintile more vulnerable to continued deprivation into adulthood.[16]

32. There has already been some improvement, but more has yet to be done. From 1990 to 2012, 50 per cent of developing countries showed declines in income inequality.[12] In many cases, this has been achieved in situations of moderate

[13] For a review of the literature and analysis of relevant policy strategies for reducing inequality, see *Report of the World Social Situation 2013: Inequality Matters* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 13.IV.2) and E/2014/50.

[14] UNDP, *Humanity Divided: Confronting Inequality in Developing Countries* (New York, 2013).

[15] Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2014).

[16] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013-2014* (Paris, 2014).

economic growth and robust public social investment, testifying to the central role of social policy for enabling human progress. Research has shown a one per cent increase in Government spending on social transfers to correlate with a 0.3 per cent drop in inequality in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.[17] Similarly, data from a sample of 36 countries showed social transfers accounting for 85 per cent of observed declines in inequality.[18]

33. With developing countries leading the way in declines in income inequality, through the formulation of effective and sustainable policy strategies, the prospects for realizing a new global human order are promising.

III. Strengthening the promotion of a new global human order

34. With the growing attention to inequality within the international community, the project of promoting a new global human order, in which no one is left behind, has taken on renewed fervour. Spurred by the implementation gaps and disparate outcomes of current commitments to equitable and just development, the post-2015 development agenda is likely to feature the reduction and prevention of high inequality. These goals have been supported by United Nations system agencies and are featured in the report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970). A concrete and systemic focus on global inequality within the international development agenda will have brought development dialogue full circle to the vision of development espoused in Copenhagen in 1995 and reiterated in the Millennium Declaration: a vision that recognizes people and the social policies that enable their equitable progress as central elements of equitable, inclusive and sustainable development for all.

35. In parallel, major global development partners have committed themselves to ensuring more equitable human progress. For example, the World Bank has established the twin goals of ending extreme poverty by 2030 and promoting shared prosperity by fostering income growth for the bottom 40 per cent of the population in every country.

36. While development remains the primary responsibility of each nation, the United Nations system and other stakeholders in the international community have a continued role to play in facilitating and promoting effective guidance norms and strategies.

A. Strengthening the focus on poverty eradication beyond income

37. Poverty eradication must remain the core goal of all sustainable development efforts. However, raising humanity above the poverty line of $1.25 per day alleviates only the most extreme poverty and does little for achieving a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, as called for in the Universal Declaration of

[17] Philipp Doerrenberg and Andreas Peichl, "The impact of redistributive policies on inequality in OECD countries", IZA Discussion Paper, No. 6505 (Bonn, Germany, Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA), April 2012).

[18] Chen Wang and Koen Caminada, "Disentangling income inequality and the redistributive effect of social transfers and taxes in 36 LIS countries", LIS Working Paper Series, No. 567 (Luxembourg, Luxembourg Income Study (LIS), July 2011).

Human Rights. As income-based poverty is easy to measure and compare, it is likely to remain a feature of the post-2015 development agenda. To complement this, the multidimensional nature of poverty should be given due consideration in the development of strategies and policies for its eradication. Effective policies for sustained reductions in poverty need to address the links between any given poverty line and access to the basic amenities necessary for healthy, productive living, such as clean water and systems of sanitation, and decent housing, as well as opportunities for developing human capital, including through education, health care and skill-building. The deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda have provided a critical platform for translating this multidimensional focus into actionable goals.

38. In addition, as sustainable development is the indisputable framework that will shape future development efforts, there will be heightened attention to environmental protection. The relationship between human well-being and environmental protection is complex. People experiencing the greatest deprivation may often have to make unsustainable use of natural resources for food, fuel and other basic needs. Poverty eradication efforts that address such needs would therefore reduce humanity's ecological footprint. Owing to their location and living conditions, dependence on natural resources, susceptibility to illness and other mitigating factors, people living in extreme poverty often feel the effects of environmental degradation disproportionally (see E/2014/50). Therefore, efforts to protect the natural environment and to mitigate the impacts of environmental degradation will contribute to poverty eradication.

B. Promoting universal social protection

39. The establishment of universal social provisioning and basic social protection floors has proven integral to lifting and keeping people out of poverty and deprivation by reducing individual and community-level vulnerability and building human resilience. The adoption of the social protection floor initiative by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, in 2009, has heightened awareness about the importance of strengthening social protection. The varying impact of recent economic and social crises has shown such measures to be wise investments for developed and developing countries alike. The Latin American experience has been exemplary of the effectiveness of social protection and social transfers for enabling human progress. Since 2000, Latin America has seen increased implementation of a more rights-based approach to social spending, including social protection. Initiatives have included a universal child allowance and old-age pension, as well as disability, sickness and maternity benefits. These have paralleled key instruments of social policy for poverty alleviation and redistribution, including conditional cash transfers. Together, these initiatives have served to alleviate poverty, protect the most socially and economically disadvantaged members of society and reduce socioeconomic inequalities.

40. In addition to improving the lives of the beneficiaries, social protection and social transfers can also pay significant returns to wider development efforts while still being affordable. For example, according to the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, Brazil's Bolsa Familia programme cost 0.3 per cent of GDP in the period 2008-2009, yet accounted for 20 to 25 per cent of the reduction of inequality. Similarly, the International Labour

Organization estimates that universal old-age pension and child benefits in the United Republic of Tanzania will result in a 35 per cent reduction in poverty.

41. Despite proven benefits, over 50 per cent of the world's population remains without any form of social security.[19] Resource constraints have limited public social spending in many developing countries. In some cases where this is the reality, official development assistance (ODA) funds a large portion of public social spending. On the positive side, this suggests that international donors are shifting focus from stop-gap emergency aid towards building resilience through social protection. However, this type of financing is not sustainable.

C. Improving financing for development

42. Since the adoption of the Monterrey Consensus, the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, in 2002, official development assistance has played an expanded role in the development process. In 2013, such assistance reached an unprecedented high of $134.8 billion, after declines in 2011 and 2012.[20] Yet, most donors that committed to contributing the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income, established at the Conference, have yet to reach that level.

43. Nonetheless, ODA has been an essential source of financial and technical cooperation among many developing countries. For example, among countries with annual government spending under $500 per person in terms of purchasing power parity, ODA constitutes about one third of Government revenues.[21] Other international financial flows, particularly private capital flows, have also expanded significantly in the past 10 years.

44. International dialogue on financing for development has shifted considerably beyond a focus on North-South ODA. Greater attention is being paid to domestic resource mobilization and to a more integrated approach to trade and aid. Within the United Nations system, preparations are currently under way for the third International Conference on Financing for Development. The Conference will review the commitments of existing international agreements on development financing, such as the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, with a view to reinvigorating and strengthening the financing for development follow-up process, with consideration for the shifting context and the post-2015 development agenda. Improving the effectiveness of both public and private finance, increased attention to South-South cooperation, migrant remittances and multi-stakeholder, cross-sectoral partnerships are some key issues emerging from the ongoing dialogue on development financing. Also, the report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing was mindful of the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and guided by the resolve of Member States that the post-2015 development agenda reinforce the commitment of the international community to sustainable development on the basis of a coherent approach that integrates its economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

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[19] International Labour Organization, *World Social Security Report 2010/11* (Geneva, 2010).

[20] Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, "Aid to developing countries rebounds in 2013 to reach an all-time high", 8 April 2014.

[21] Development Initiatives, *Investments to End Poverty* (Bristol, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Development Initiatives, 201^).

D. Promoting national and international cooperation and collaboration

45. To leave no one behind requires cooperating to increase the pace of human progress where it is most severely challenged. This is true in both the national and international contexts. Social integration and cohesion should thus figure heavily in national and international development strategies.

46. At the national level, aside from stronger, data driven and universally applied social policies, a strong civil society sector can play a key role in advancing social integration. Civil society organizations can empower individuals and communities to mobilize around shared goals and needs, and provide space for mediating these issues, first among themselves and then for decision makers, when needed. In addition, as collective bodies independent of the State, civil society organizations can hold decision makers accountable to any commitments made. According to the *Human Development Report 2014*, experience in Bangladesh and Brazil has shown that through the input, support and mobilization of civil society organizations, the reach and impact of targeted policies are enhanced. These examples have also shown the effectiveness of collective citizen action for innovation and local resource mobilization, at times filling critical gaps in policy implementation and service delivery. With this in mind, it is worth examining the wider impact of civil society on development performance, with attention to the effective up-scaling of civil society micro-level initiatives for macro-level impact.

47. At the international level, greater attention should be given to collaboration and cooperation with those countries and regions most challenged by human deprivation and ensuring that the international system creates an enabling environment for those countries to prioritize the needs of their constituents. Just as at the national level, asymmetries in decision-making at the international level and in international economic relations can contribute to the exclusion of whole countries and regions from the benefits of development. These asymmetries should be addressed. Although Governments hold primary responsibility for addressing inequality and deprivation within countries, global rules, or the lack thereof, may reinforce inequalities or limit government action at the national level to reduce them.

48. Some emerging markets have increased their voices at the level of international policy, but the voices of least developed countries and many other developing countries have remained excluded. To ensure that international policy is responsive to the needs of all Governments and their constituents, a system of accountability and transparency must be put in place.

49. In promoting the new global human order, the special needs of Africa stand out as integral to successful global transformation. At the World Summit for Social Development in 1995, Member States gave particular attention to the development of the African continent and the need for stronger international cooperation in this regard. The African continent remains a major stakeholder in the global development effort, and dialogue within and about the continent is calling more for collaboration with the African people on achieving equitable and sustained social and economic progress.

E. Supporting comprehensive data gathering and access

50. Access to more detailed and comprehensive data is essential to promoting a new global human order and ensuring improvements in human well-being that are socially and economically just, particularly if more nuanced and integrated policy strategies are to be undertaken. In order to properly monitor the Millennium Development Goals process, many developing countries have deepened their capacity for data collection. For example, in the period 1990-1994, barely half of the countries in developing regions had at least one data point available to accurately measure skilled attendance at birth, whereas 90 per cent of those countries had this type of data available in the period 2005-2009. National efforts to improve data availability have been supported by the international community with efforts to produce effective guidance on priorities, methodologies and strategies for collection.

51. For improvements in data availability to have an impact on development, data needs to be used effectively in informing policy. The information available from population censuses and household surveys has remained widely underutilized (see *Human Development Report 2014*). These sources often contain valuable information disaggregated by wealth quintile, sex, population group and other categories found relevant in shaping the development experiences of individuals and communities. Effective utilization of this data could help to identify and address existing inequalities and systemic deprivation that remain hidden in the aggregated data.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

52. **It has been nearly 20 years since the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action sought to centre development action on social progress, and almost 15 years since the South Summit sought to shape that call to action into a new global human order. Much progress has been made, but transformations in human well-being have been too slow for too many.**

53. **While domestic efforts are key to realizing improvements in human well-being, they cannot be successful without global commitment and support. To move development forward in a truly just, inclusive and sustainable manner, the international community must elevate the importance of the social dimension of development and be uncompromising in its implementation. With this in mind, countries and the international community may wish:**

(a) **To continue to prioritize the eradication of poverty in all its forms, and increase the attention given to the relationship between human deprivation and environmental degradation;**

(b) **To continue to improve the employability of all members of society and ensure their access to full and productive employment and decent work, including through developing and strengthening partnerships with civil society, the relevant entities of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, and other relevant actors;**

(c) **To continue to create an enabling environment for the development of a vibrant, representative and accountable civil society sector as a means of strengthening the efficiency, equity and effectiveness of investments in human well-being and social integration;**

(d) To remain committed to gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as to the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all development efforts;

(e) To remain committed to the vision of people-centred development evoked at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, with particular attention to the realization of social integration and cohesion as outlined in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action;

(f) To recognize the primacy of sustainable social policy and policy coordination for reducing inequality and ensuring the realization of human rights and equitable human progress within and among countries, with particular attention to access to quality education, skills development and health care, and the establishment of universal systems of social protection;

(g) To strengthen national capacities for robust data collection and effective data utilization in support of policy formulation, implementation and monitoring;

(h) To strengthen international collaboration in support of Africa's sustainable development, and continue to partner with low-income and fragile States in strengthening their capacity to share in the benefits of globalization;

(i) To continue to explore innovative and sustainable means of resource mobilization for development, with particular attention to ensuring that international rules, regulations and guidance allow the necessary space for prioritizing human well-being at the country level.